

July 2015 Newsletter

- CIRM Invites Patient Advocates to Help Shape Strategic Plan
- Stem Cell Therapy for Spinal Cord Injury Back on Track
- Caladrius Treats First Patient in CIRM-Funded Skin Cancer Trial
- Brain Tumor Patient First to be Treated by City of Hope's Alpha Clinic
- CIRM to Host Free HIV/AIDS Town Hall Event in Los Angeles
- New CIRM-Funded Tech Tool Speeds Up Stem Cell Research
- The Latest Publications by CIRM-Funded Researchers
- Upcoming CIRM Events
- CIRM 2.0 Funding Opportunities
- CIRM Job Openings

CIRM Invites Patient Advocates to Help Shape Strategic Plan

Help us sprint to

The stem cell agency is a

Our mission is to accelerate stem
needs. Over the last ten years we
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HIV/AIDS, in clinical trials. But th

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hear from you what you think we

So come
for a chance to share y

Monday, July
Sanford Consortium for
2880 Torrey Pines Scenic

A light lunch
Please RSVP to

CIRM
CALIFORNIA

The stem cell agency is at a pivotal point in its life and we want you, the patient advocacy community, to help us shape our future. We are now developing a Strategic Plan to guide the direction we take in the next few years. We want those years to be filled with purpose and to push the science even further and faster than before. The voices of the patients and patient advocates have always been the

most important to us. You are the reason we are here. That's why CIRM President and CEO C. Randal Mills has scheduled meetings in San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco during the week of July 13th to hear your ideas for our future. See links below for meeting details.

- Download flyers and RSVP for the patient advocate events in San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco

Stem Cell Therapy for Spinal Cord Injury Back on Track



On June 8th, Asterias Biotherapeutics announced they had treated their first participant in a CIRM-funded clinical trial testing an embryonic stem cell-based treatment for spinal cord injury. This trial represents the reboot of a 2010 Geron, Inc. trial that was terminated due to a change in business goals. The patient was dosed in Atlanta, Georgia though up to 8 centers will be involved in the trial, including some in California. It is hoped that injecting cells into the injured spinal cord will repair some of the damaged nerve signals that normally travel from the brain to the body via the spinal cord. Any recovery of sensation could dramatically improve the quality of lives for spinal cord injury victims.

- Read our blog about this first patient milestone
- Read an earlier press release about the FDA green lighting the trial
- Get more details at clinicaltrials.gov

Caladrius Treats First Patient in CIRM-Funded Skin Cancer Trial



In late June, Caladrius Biosciences (formerly NeoStem) joined the growing list of CIRM grantees that have begun clinical trials. This Phase 3 study is testing the effectiveness of a therapy against metastatic melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer. The therapeutic approach targets cancer stem cells, which are believed to survive chemotherapy and other cancer-targeting treatments, and can cause a relapse by enabling tumors to grow and spread. The patient's own cancer stem cells are exposed to the patient's immune system in the laboratory and then these immune cells, primed to attack the cancer cells, are delivered back to the patient where they will hopefully eradicate the melanoma throughout the body. CIRM's \$17.7 million support for the trial represents one of the first grants funded under the new CIRM 2.0 awards.

- Read our blog about the Caladrius announcement
- Read our blog about Norm Beegun, who participated in an earlier clinical trial of this therapy
- Get more details about the trial at clinicaltrials.gov

Brain Tumor Patient First to be Treated by City of Hope's Alpha Clinic



City of Hope®

ACT-I

Alpha Clinic for
Cell Therapy
and Innovation

In late June, City of Hope announced they treated the first patient under their Alpha Clinic for Cell Therapy and Innovation (ACT-I) which is part of CIRM's Alpha Stem Cell Clinics Network. The network is an initiative which aims to accelerate the development and delivery of stem cell therapies to patients by leveraging the strengths of partner clinics—so that together they form an efficient, scalable and sustainable network that will attract and conduct high-quality clinical trials. UC San Diego and a UCLA/UC Irvine consortium make up the other two Alpha Clinics. In this City of Hope trial, genetically-modified nerve stem cells were delivered to the patient for the treatment of glioblastoma, an extremely aggressive form of brain cancer. The stem cells naturally seek out the brain cancer cells where they are designed to release a chemotherapy drug which hopefully provides a more localized treatment with less toxic side effects to the rest of the body.

- [Read City of Hope's press release](#)
- [Learn more about CIRM's Alpha Stem Cell Clinics Network](#)

CIRM to Host Free HIV/AIDS Town Hall Event in Los Angeles

"Cure" is no longer just a distant dream for the HIV/AIDS patient advocate and research community, it's a goal. CIRM is funding two projects in clinical trials — one led by Calimmune Inc. and one by City of Hope and Sangamo BioSciences — that aim to genetically modify a patient's own blood stem cells to block HIV infection. To share the progress of these projects and others with the public, CIRM is partnering with the AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA), Being Alive and the University of Southern California (USC) to host an HIV/AIDS Town Hall event called "Countdown to a Cure: California Leads the Way." The event is on Thursday, July 30th from 5:30p to

8.30p and we're providing food and refreshments. The location is Fiesta Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, Los Angeles. And, of course, it's free. If you are interested in joining us and being part of the discussion please RSVP to: daniel@beingalivela.org or call 323-874-4322.

- [Read our blog about the event](#)

New CIRM-Funded Tech Tool Speeds Up Stem Cell Research



On June 24th, Fluidigm Corporation announced the launch of their new Callisto system, a device that gives researchers more precision and control over maintaining and manipulating cells. Reprogramming an adult cell into a stem cell-like iPS cell is often a long, labor-intensive process requiring round-the-clock maintenance of the cells. The Callisto, made possible by two CIRM grants, will allow researchers to systematically and simultaneously test different combinations of factors, to see which ones are most effective at changing stem cells into the desired types of cells. And once they know which combinations work best they can use the device to reproduce them time after time.

- [Read our blog about the Callisto system](#)

The Latest Publications by CIRM-Funded Researchers

CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the fundamentals of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here's an example of CIRM-funded research that was published in June along with a press release from the grantees' home institution and an entry from *The Stem Cellar*, CIRM's official blog:

June 26th - *Molecular Psychiatry*

- UC Irvine Release: UCI-led study demonstrates how Huntington's disease proteins spread from cell to cell
- CIRM Blog: Tracking Huntington's spread in the brain

Upcoming CIRM Events

July 13-15

CIRM Strategic Plan Discussions with Patient Advocate Community (see top headline to download flyers) — RSVP to info@cirm.ca.gov

- July 13: noon, Sanford Consortium for Regenerative Medicine, 2880 Torrey Pines Scenic Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037
- July 14: noon, Eli and Edythe Broad CIRM Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at USC 1425 San Pablo Street, 1st floor conf. room Los Angeles, CA 90033
- July 15: noon, CIRM Headquarters, 210 King Street (3rd floor), San Francisco, CA 94107

July 23rd

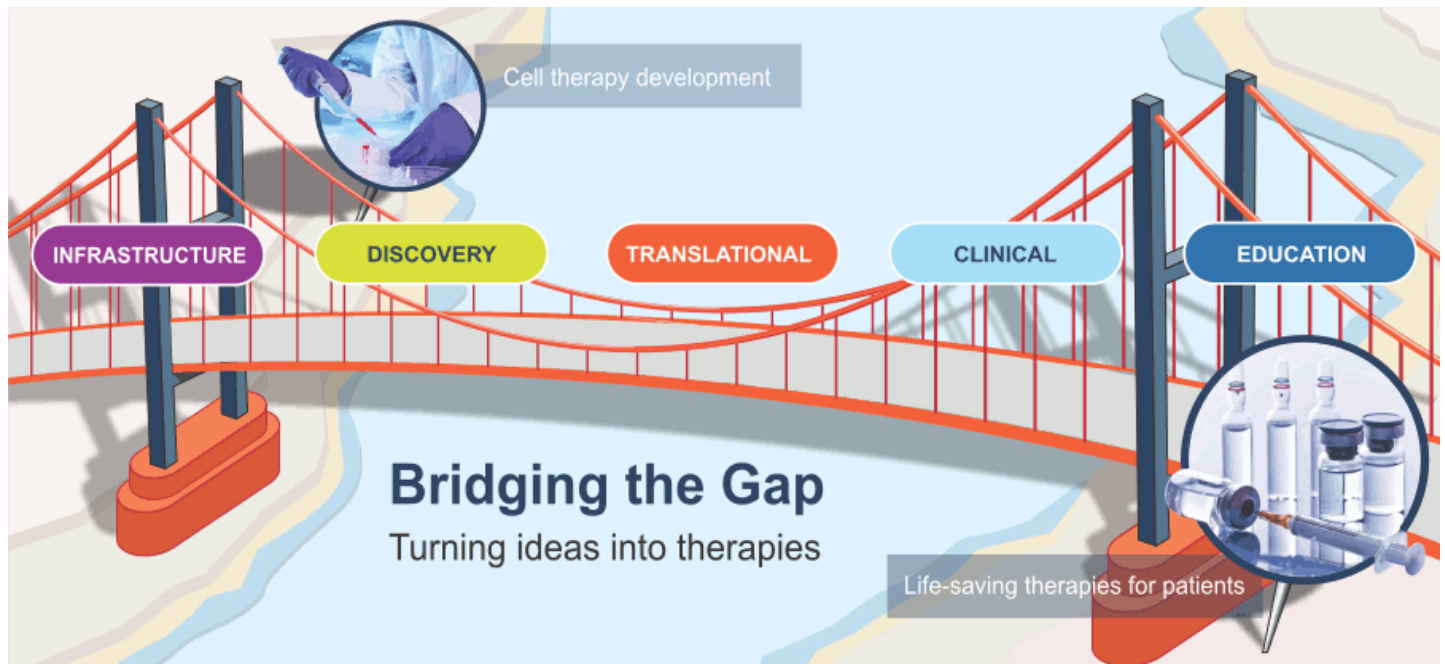
The CIRM governing Board will hold its fourth in-person meeting of 2015 on July 23rd in the Bay Area. Agendas and details will be posted to the [meetings page](#) 10 days before each event.

July 30th

Free HIV/AIDS Town Hall Event, "Countdown to a Cure: California Leads the Way"

- Thursday, July 30th, 5:30 - 8:30pm, Fiesta Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, Los Angeles
- RSVP to: daniel@beingalivela.org or call 323-874-4322
- Food and freshments provided

CIRM 2.0 Funding Opportunities



CIRM will accept applications on a monthly basis applications for our three Clinical Stage Programs described in the Program Announcements listed below:

- PA 15-01: Partnering opportunity for late stage preclinical projects
- PA 15-02: Partnering opportunity for clinical trial stage projects
- PA 15-03: Partnering opportunity for supplemental accelerating activities

To submit an application, visit our CIRM 2.0 awards page for more information. Our Discovery and Translational Stage Programs will be announced later this year.

Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements

CIRM Job Openings

The following positions are now open. Follow the links below to apply or go to our jobs page:

- Website and Social Media Manager
- Senior Project Manager/Project Manager, Clinical Advisory Panels
- Senior Science Officer

Source URL: <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/newsletter/july-2015-newsletter>